



## CAMPING WITH BEARS

One of the many reasons people come to the Superior National Forest is to enjoy seeing native wildlife species in their natural habitat. While pleasing to watch, some of these animals have the ability to ruin your trip. Most notable is the black bear.

There are no hard and fast rules to insure protection from a bear. Bear behavior differs under different conditions. The bears you may encounter while visiting the Forest are wild animals and they can be dangerous.

Here are a few tips designed to help you prevent bear trouble during your visit:

- Bears have an excellent sense of smell and are attracted by food odors. Don't leave your food where they can get to it. While car-camping, keep your food in your vehicle, preferably in the trunk, at night or when you are away from the campsite.
- While camping in the wilderness or in the back-country, hang your food pack in the trees when you leave your site and at night. As a rule of thumb, remember that if an average sized person can touch the suspended pack, so can a bear. See illustrations on reverse side.
- Don't let an island campsite lull you into a false sense of security. Bears are very good swimmers.
- Keep a clean campsite. Burn all food scraps and left-over grease. Don't dispose of left-overs in the wilderness latrine. Bears will find them and destroy the latrine in the process.
- If you should leave your campsite, tie your tent flaps open. Bears are naturally inquisitive and may want to tour your temporary home. If the tent is closed, they may make a new doorway.
- NEVER store food in your tent. Bears will use their sense of smell and find any snack or candy bar you may try to hide.

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- If a bear does wander into your campsite, don't panic. They are usually easily frightened by loud noises. Try yelling or banging some cooking pots together. Do not charge a bear—they may become defensive.
- In case a bear refuses to leave or becomes hostile, move to another campsite.
- Never stand between a mother and her cub. Female bears are extremely protective of their young.

Bears are a natural part of the Forest. If you have the misfortune to have your camp raided by one, before you get mad at the bear, look around your camp and ask, "Did I invite it?"

Following are illustrations of two ways to hang your food pack when camping in a wilderness or back-country. Bears will stand up on two legs and can even jump. They are very agile tree climbers and will climb out on a branch and reach down, or just climb the main trunk and reach out for your pack.

Hanging your pack by its shoulder straps will weaken or break them. Wrap rope around the pack.

